

FORT ZUMWALT SCHOOL DISTRICT

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

**110 Virgil Street
O'Fallon, Missouri 63366-2637**

Honored for "Distinction in Performance" by the State Board of Education

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February 15, 2012

Dr. Bernard J. DuBray
Superintendent of Schools

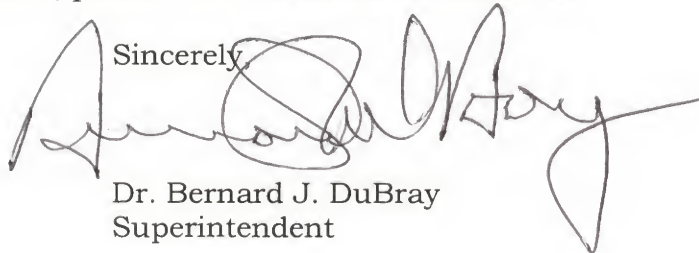
Dr. Charles N. Davis, Ph.D.
University of Missouri
201 Neff Hall
Columbia, MO 65211

Dear Dr. Davis,

I have received your Sunshine Law request and enclosed a memo from the district's Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, and a copy of the only formal request received by the district during the period of time you specified. In addition, Dr. Floyd's memorandum describes the three (3) additional informal complaints and the action taken with each.

If I can be of other assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Dr. Bernard J. DuBray
Superintendent

BJD:wp

Enclosure

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Memo

To: Dr. DuBray

From: Jackie Floyd

Date: 2/13/2012

Re: Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Media

In the past seven years, I have received four verbal concerns/complaints on books housed in our school libraries or used as an instructional resource. Two of the books were housed in our Libraries – At the secondary level the book “Rash” by Pete Hautman, and at the elementary level the book “Humane Machine – the Production Line.” In both cases the patrons were directed to complete a Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Media.

We only received a Reconsideration form on the title “Humane Machine – the Production Line.” A review of the book was conducted and the book was pulled from the shelf. Even though we did not receive a Reconsideration form for the title “Rash”, but we did review the book and found the content to be significantly vulgar, with many profanities and sexual language. The Librarians have opted to pull the book from circulation.

The two instructional resource books that were brought to my attention were “The Glass Castle” by Jeannette Walls and “The country Wife” by William Wycherley. Again the patrons were directed to submit a Material Reconsideration form. I did not receive a Reconsideration form on either book, but I did review both books with the respective department chairs. Both books did have some profanity, but the decision was made to leave both books as instructional resources not to be used as a class novel, but as a choice read.

I have attached a copy of the one Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Media form that I received on the “Humane Machine – the Production Line.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Jackie

CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MEDIA

Media consist of all types of print and nonprint materials, i.e., texts, books, films (16mm and 8mm), filmstrips, tapes, records, study prints, pictures, transparencies and all other printed or published items.

Type of media BOOK (PRINT)
 Name of item and/or title THE PRODUCTION LINE SERIES: THE HUMAN MACHINE
 Publisher/Producer/Author SARAH ANGLISS SMART APPLE MEDIA (1999)
 Request initiated by ANISA MEARS
 Telephone 636-272-4870 Address 512 Duchesne Ave City O'Fallon
 Complainant represents: X Self
 _____ Organization _____
 (Name of Organization)
 _____ Other Group _____
 (Name of Group)

1. Did you read, view, or listen to the complete item? Yes X No _____
2. How was the item acquired? (Assignment, free selection, from a friend, etc.) Free selection
3. Is item part of a set or series? Yes X No _____
 If yes, did you read, view or listen to all of the set or series? Yes X No X (Not all)
4. What is objectionable regarding the item and why? (Be specific) Please see statement
5. What do you feel might be the result of using this item? _____
6. How did you react to the objectionable part of the item? _____
7. Were there good sections included in the item? Yes X No _____
 If yes, please list them: The growth of a fetus.
The differences between
male & female.
8. Did you locate reviews of the item? Yes _____ No X
 If yes, please cite them: _____

If no, why not? it tried through the internet, but was unable to locate any.

9. Did the review(s) substantiate your feelings? _____
10. What do you believe is the theme of this item? Information/Non-fiction

My son is a fifth grader at Forest Park. As parents, we have spoken to our son about puberty and 'age appropriate' information regarding intercourse. I also have twin 3rd graders, male, at the school. Their maturity level is below that of our oldest one. When my oldest came home with this book, I initially was not concerned because he has previously read other books in this set. We do not discourage our sons from learning, however, we do make sure that the information they are receiving is appropriate for their intellectual and emotional state. As my oldest came to the middle of the book he began asking me questions about the terms 'orgasm' and 'clitoris.' As this is not something we have covered, nor will be covered in the approved curriculum for the 'growth and human development' course at Forest Park, I became alarmed. I spoke to my son calmly, we looked at the book together and I explained what I felt he needed at this time. Inside I was livid that this was in the school library. I have other children who are not ready for this that could have chosen this book at the school! In the book there is a clear cross section picture of the mechanics of intercourse, that any child could understand. It also states that, as a fact, masturbation is 'a good way for people to find out which parts of their own body give them pleasure.' This is an ethical issue not a scientific fact. I was also disappointed that in the front section of the book there were multiple references to the 4 pages (12-15) that speak in depth about intercourse. This plays upon the curiosity of children.

I read the entire book. There were some sections that were appropriate for 5th graders.

I understand that knowledge and information needs to be accessible. I am of the opinion that this book gives too much detail/graphics and needs to have some type of parental control on it. We are required to sign permission forms for our children to have the growth and human development section of health. We even have a preview night! This book provides **more detailed information** than what is approved for the curriculum of the growth and human development section. It appears a double standard to have the need for parental approval for this class/information and not for the information included in a book. Allowing all children open access to this book, possibly before they are emotionally and developmentally ready, is irresponsible. A possible solution would be to have the book in the counselor's office, the nurses' office or in the library ready for checkout with a parental permission form. I am not speaking just for my children. I have spoken with other parents who strongly agree with me. I specifically am concerned for those children that don't have stable homes or even homes in which they can speak openly and honestly.

In reading my request, I ask that you look at the age of the children in our school. I ask that you look at the discrepancy between the information in this book and the information given in the curriculum material, which again, requires parental approval. Please acknowledge that this is more in depth and detailed than the majority of these children need to be exposed to. We need to reassess the role of the school, the parents and maintain consistency, honesty and integrity in that balance.

Anisa Mears

Ms. Floyd,

I am the parent at Forest Park that had concerns regarding a library book my son picked out at school. I have turned in the requested forms and was curious as to the time table regarding these matters. I would like a response if possible, as Mr. Gettman thought it might take a few weeks. I would be willing to speak with you or any other person(s) regarding my concerns.

Thank you for your time,

Anisa Mears